Pupil premium strategy statement – Aspire Academy
January 2023-December 2026

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils last academic year.

School Overview

Detail	Data
Number of pupils in school	PAN 195
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	73%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers **(3 year plans are recommended – you must still publish an updated statement each academic year)**	January 2023 to 31st December 2026
Date this statement was published	September 2024
Date on which it will be reviewed	September 2026
Statement authorised by	Stacey Ward
Pupil premium lead	Laura Stanforth
Governor / Trustee lead	Lynn Benton

Funding Overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£59068
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year *Recovery premium received in academic year 2023/24 cannot be carried forward beyond August 31, 2024.*	£
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years *(enter £0 if not applicable)*	£
Total budget for this academic year *If your school is an academy in a trust that pools this funding, state the amount available to your school this academic year*	£56098

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of Intent

As a fully inclusive academy, our intention is to provide an inspirational learning environment with high quality teaching and learning for all. Our Trust ethos is 'life in all its fullness, a place to thrive' and our goal is that all children within our schools will receive outstanding teaching and support throughout their time with us. Our aim is that no child is left behind socially or academically and we work continuously to remove low expectations, raise lifelong aspirations and focus on removing barriers to learning.

We want all of our disadvantaged students to receive an equitable education in which we recognise that one size does not fit all and that we need to focus resources where they are most needed. We do this through rigorous tracking, careful planning, evaluation, targeted support and intervention. Providing all our children with the access and opportunities to enjoy success and maximise their life opportunities. We focus extensively on times of transition to ensure that we understand the needs of the incoming students and that we communicate effectively with the next provider.

Our disadvantaged students enter the academy with lower overall attainment than their peers. Therefore adaptive teaching that is able to support and challenge each child regardless of their starting points is crucial. All students attending Aspire academy have SEN status and currently 25% have an EHCP. This number is expected to rise due to a number of students currently in process.

We focus extensively on 'quality first teaching', as this will have the most beneficial impact on all students. We have highlighted Rosenshine's principles of instruction to all staff throughout our CPD and in September (2025) are embedding 'Independent Learning Zone' tasks to develop resilience and determination in all our learners at all stages. We have focussed on the development of questioning techniques, including cold calling, think pair share and directed questioning in which questioning is pre-planned and carefully targeted.

Reading is a real focus at Aspire due to the low reading ages that many of our students enter our setting with. In the last academic year (2024/2025) over % of the total cohort entered with a reading age at initial baseline of 7 years or below. Over 85% of these students were disadvantaged. We work hard to ensure students make rapid progress in reading through supported interventions such as Fresh Start Phonics, 1:1 reading support and Reading Plus. We also promote reading for pleasure and provide all of our students with books to encourage reading both in school and at home. In order for all students to be able to fully access the curriculum and to achieve the outcomes they are capable of, they need to be able to read fluently and to find it a pleasurable experience. As an academy we have invested heavily in ensuring that reading is placed at the centre of our provision both as a wider strategy but also in terms of specific interventions to improve reading proficiency for readers at all levels.

We appreciate that we may need to remove barriers to education in order for disadvantaged students to achieve equity with their peers and so we focus carefully on the costs of the curriculum and extended opportunities to ensure that all children have equitable access. We also recognise the importance of shared routines in school and have focused on simple routines in every lesson and at social times. All lessons follow the 'I do, We do, You do' learning cycles and this repetition of simple structures benefits the learning of all.

We have invested significant time and effort in developing robust KS3 assessment and crucially, in preparing students and parents/carers for those assessments. In order for students to have access to the high quality teaching and support that we provide, children need to be present in school and therefore we have focussed on raising the attendance of all of our students. This will directly benefit disadvantaged students the most as we are focussing our initiatives on these students first, through our disadvantaged first approaches.

Through our assessment processes, we have identified that there are students for whom literacy and numeracy levels are a concern, a high proportion of these are disadvantaged students. We have put in place specific intervention for these students to ensure they improve and are able to fully access the curriculum

We intend for all students to feel involved both within our school and local community and we have focussed aspects of our provision in ensuring access to wide ranging enrichment activities and that disadvantaged students are well represented in all aspects of school life.

We appreciate that the pandemic has had a more significant impact on children from disadvantaged backgrounds and we aim to continue to ensure that we identify and close any academic or social gaps, when they arise.
Our strategies are spread across all year groups, as disadvantage is spread across all year groups, which helps us to avoid 'initiative overload' on specific year groups.

Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1	*Academic Outcomes* - Disadvantaged students currently outperform non-disadvantaged students (2023-2024 data) in a number of subject areas and year groups, therefore our focus remains raising attainment across English and Maths and increasing the number of disadvantaged students achieving both Maths and English grades at a level that demonstrates strong progress by 2026.
2	**Attendance** for disadvantaged students is lower than that of their non-disadvantaged peers. We are working to improve attendance for all cohorts. Some of our disadvantaged students experience significant difficulties due to their socio economic profile. Many students have experienced disengagement in previous settings and we continue to deal with the impact of this on attendance at the point of referral.
3	Access to **enrichment activities and activities which fill cultural gaps and experiences**. Nationally disadvantaged students have been less likely to go on trips/visits where there is a cost involved and subsequently miss out on a range of opportunities to widen their cultural capital.
4	High levels of **social, emotional and mental health** difficulties.
5	**Lower literacy levels, below age related reading levels and fewer opportunities to access books** for many disadvantaged students compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. In 2023/2024 76% of our cohort was disadvantaged and only 11% of our whole school cohort had a reading age above 14 years at the start of the academic year. 24% of students baselined recorded a reading age of 7 years or below.

Intended Outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved attainment for disadvantaged students across the curriculum with a focus on KS3 students and all students in English and Maths progress and final attainment.	An increase in the number of disadvantaged students achieving both Maths and English grades at a level that demonstrates strong progress by 2026.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Attendance for disadvantaged students to continue to remain above AP national average, whilst closing the attendance gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged students and overall aiming for national average.	Improved attendance year on year and continuing to remain above national average for AP attendance.
Disadvantaged students have improved participation in extracurricular events and trips and planned opportunities to engage in a range of enrichment and cultural experiences.	All disadvantaged students, who wish to, participate in external trips and visits. Similar proportions attend extra-curricular sessions when compared to non-disadvantaged students. Disadvantaged students well represented on student council and other leadership/ambassador roles for the school.
Social, Emotional and Mental health difficulties are identified early and relevant support (internal and/or external) in place when appropriate	All students identified as needing support with their SEMH have a care plan in place and is shared with teaching staff via seating plan software and consistently with learning passports for SEND students. Improved dialogue between school and parents. Positive data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations. Motional data indicates progress made by disadvantaged students across key elements linked to SEMH at DC3.
Higher percentage of students reading at or above expected levels due to effective testing and highly effective literacy strategy embedded throughout the school	Disadvantaged students have similar reading ages to non- disadvantaged students. Students tested regularly and results were actioned by placing on correct interventions. Improvements seen in book scrutinies and engagement in lessons. NGRT reading data indicates improvements in the reading ages of disadvantaged students. Introduction of comprehension intervention linked to students' individual reading needs.

Activity in this academic year

This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium (and recovery premium) funding **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Teaching and learning focus on evidence based strategies to support Quality First Teaching. Development of shared approaches and routines using 'Walkthrus'.	*Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils (DFE, 2015)* suggests high quality teaching as a key aspect of successful schools. EEF toolkit: collaborative learning + 5 months Feedback: + 6 months Metacognition and self regulation: + 7 months	1
Trust strategic RAG process (academic, inclusion and reading) Rigorous monitoring, tracking and intervention of student progress through faculties, SEND and SLT link Disadvantaged first focus	EEF toolkit: Individualised instruction: + 4 months Small group tuition: + 4 months Extending school time: + 3 months	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Trust Director support for English, Maths and Science To support disadvantaged students to make positive progress. To monitor and implement appropriate interventions. ● Progress in each subject area is positive ● Support for curriculum leaders ● Cross Trust analysis of performance and sharing of good practice ● 1-1/small group interventions with disadvantaged students ● Aligned curriculums and assessment (2024/2025)	EEF toolkit: Individualised instruction: + 4 months Small group tuition: + 4 months Extending school time: + 3 months	1, 3
Reading Coordinator to oversee and facilitate specific reading interventions to support disadvantaged students to develop their reading skills, boost their reading age and to engage students in reading for pleasure.	Research by the National Literacy Trust found that fewer than 50% of young people enjoyed reading, research by the NLT also indicates that 1 in 15 children between 8 and 18 do not have access to books in their home. https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-engagement-in-2022/	
Purchase of Edulink to allow staff to access seating plans which have disadvantaged	Provides staff with essential information in an easy and accessible format.	1, 4, 5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
students clearly identified, key data such as reading age displayed and key documents to aid planning		
Train all middle leaders to enable them to empower their teams to support disadvantaged students in their subject area or year team ● All middle leaders and senior links can clearly identify disadvantaged students and the support they require ● All middle leaders fluent with data for use in RAG meetings	Empowering middle leaders and increasing their responsibility for the progress of all cohorts has a positive impact on outcomes. EEF toolkit: individualised instruction: + 4 months Small group tuition: + 4 months Extending school time: + 3 months	1, 2, 4, 5

Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support, structured interventions)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Comprehensive literacy programme - Reading Plus, Ninja Vocabulary and Fresh Start. To improve the reading ages of all learners so they can access the curriculum.	Reading comprehension, vocabulary and other literacy skills are heavily linked with overall attainment. EEF toolkit: Phonics: + 5 months Reading comprehension strategies: + 6 months TA interventions: + 4 months Acquiring disciplinary literacy is key for students as they learn new, more complex concepts in each subject: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools	EEF (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)	1, 5
1:1 or small group tuition/intervention	EEF toolkit: 1:1: + 5 months Individualised instruction: + 4 months	1, 5
Key students mentored by members of SLT. Underperforming students identified and assigned a member of SLT or key middle leader as an academic mentor. Regular meetings with students and parents. Progress and attitude are closely monitored.	EEF toolkit: Mentoring: + 2 months Parental engagement: + 4 months	1, 2, 4, 5
All students are able to access curriculum and enrichment trips regardless of cost.	EEF toolkit: Arts participation : + 3 months	1, 3

Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Provision of attendance support team/officers Warm space Fridays- attendance focused so parents can meet informally with the attendance support team and receive advice and support. Transport for disadvantaged students living within key boundaries and encouraging regular attendance. Attendance rewards to acknowledge improving and strong attendance and to encourage attendance improvements. Embedding principles of good practice as set out in DfE's Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	EEF toolkit: Parental engagement + 4 months	2
Consistency through whole school behaviour and inclusion policy. Create a purposeful learning environment for all students. Clear expectations and boundaries for students.	EEF toolkit: Behaviour interventions + 4 months	1, 2, 4
Rewards and incentives for sustained attendance and achievement. Launch of WAR score reward initiative with financial reward linked to achievement using daily WAR scores. Enrichment activities linked to student voice and capacity increased to cover all students across all sites.	EEF toolkit: Behaviour interventions + 4 months	1, 2, 4
Parental engagement - Fareshare food parcels to support our most vulnerable students and families. Warm space Fridays to continue offering an opportunity for parents and carers to meet and receive advice and support from peers and key academy staff. Continued social media sharing of success and signposting of support and help available.	EEF toolkit: Parental engagement: + 4 months	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Parent review day activities focused on academic achievement with opportunities for parents and carers to join literacy and numeracy sessions designed to enable them to better develop their own skills and to support their child in the learning.		

Part B: Review of the previous academic year

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

- *In Maths we purchased a range of scientific calculators (in accordance with JCQ and exam regulations) to ensure all students were able to have the opportunity to use technology (where appropriate) in GCSE Maths. Explicit instruction on how to use these effectively has been provided to KS4 students and progress in Maths remained positive.*
- *Rates of progress continued to be steady across all cohorts. Rates for disadvantaged students are stronger in Year 10 and Year 8 English, and Year 8 and Year 9 Maths compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. Where there are gaps in rates of progress these are minimal.*

Subject	PP Rates of Progress	Non PP Rates of Progress
Year 10 English	+2.14	+2.13
Year 10 Maths	+2.06	+2.19
Year 9 English	+1.86	+2.00
Year 9 Maths	+1.59	+1.50
Year 8 English	+2.40	+2.10
Year 8 Maths	+3.20	+2.60

- *In terms of academic attainment 100% of non PP students achieved Maths and English qualifications at a level 1 or above (or equivalent through Functional skills) However, there were 3 students who failed to achieve either qualification and these were disadvantaged students leading to 90% of students achieving Maths and English qualifications. This Year the early entry and utilisation of functional skills examinations will ensure all PP students have the opportunity to sit their examinations in Maths and English a minimum of twice over each academic year of KS4.*
- *The opportunity to develop students' cultural capital remains an integral part of all that we do at Aspire academy. Over the last year 100% of KS3 students had the opportunity to experience a fully funded 6 week forest school experience which allowed them to develop core skills in communication, resilience and leadership. Students across all sites and all key stages benefit from a funded enrichment programme that meets our core values of allowing students to be part of an Inclusive Community whilst promoting courage and empathy.*
- *PP students are a focus of Motional to track progress across social and emotional areas. Targeted support is implemented through our enrichment programme to ensure disadvantaged students are provided with the same social and cultural experiences as their non disadvantaged peers. All PP students are provided with opportunities to visit museums and art galleries, non competitive sporting opportunities are provided to develop social skills and the ability to work as a team. Motional data indicates that both PP and Non PP have the same social engagement average scores indicating no gap between the two cohorts. There is a 3 point gap between social defence with disadvantaged students having slightly raised levels of aggression, and a 3 point gap within executive function with disadvantaged students being slightly lower. These areas are targeted and tracked by Motional data. Whilst there is a gap; this is a small one and the larger than national average percentage of PP students vs the smaller non PP cohort can enable assumptions and*

individual data needs to be analysed to ensure strategies are person centred level as opposed to a cohort application level.

● *100% of PP students made progress with Fresh Start phonics and over 100% graduated the programme and moved onto the next stage of their reading support.*

● *The last available published data for the national average attendance for an alternative provision was 67% (2021 DFE) Last year overall attendance for PP students was 77.00% compared to 86.00 Non PP. The gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged students is a key target of the Academy and interventions are in place including*

    - *PP students targeted for JL student/parent plans.*

    - *PP students to be given priority on the school mini buses.*

    - *All students with attendance below 86% will have an attendance meeting using the ATTEND framework. Attendance plans started and FPN sent if appropriate.*

Period 24/25	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
PP	78%	79%	79%	78%	77%	77%
Non PP	90%	88%	86%	86%	86%	86%